

**From:** Joshua A Hansen  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 12/26/01 3:51pm  
**Subject:** Urging a stricter Microsoft Anti-Trust remedy

I write to voice my support of a stricter remedy in the Microsoft anti-trust case than has been proposed. Microsoft is more of a threat to the health of the American economy than any monopoly prior to it (Standard Oil for example). This is because what is at stake in this situation is information, and our rights to have and utilize it.

Microsoft should be required to disclose its file format and network protocol specifications to any organization, commercial or not-for-profit, without non-disclosure agreements. This would facilitate interoperability between Microsoft's products and those products which hope to compete with Microsoft.

It must be seen that Microsoft has no remorse over its unfair practices in the past, and so it will continue to repeat similar practices to maintain and solidify its monopoly for years to come. Only government intervention can alter this. Specifically, Microsoft is preparing to unleash its proprietary .NET "application framework" on the world. Much like Microsoft has done before, it will flood the marketplace with .NET-based Operating Systems and web servers until everything depends on their framework. Then, they will begin "extending" the .NET framework so no other Operating Systems will be able to interoperate with it. Through a cycle of forced license-updates, Microsoft will "lock in" most computer users in a way that strips the market of competitive forces and heaves Microsoft products only upon anybody who wishes to do anything on the Internet.

These ideas may sound radical and too conspiratorial in tone. Were they not backed by precedent this would be the case. However, the past repeats itself, so I feel justified in saying that just as Microsoft has dominated the Operating Systems, servers, Web Browsers, and Office Applications markets it will attempt to dominate the Web Services market (.NET), the Instant Messaging market (MSN Messenger), the video game console market (XBOX), the streaming audio and video and digital audio market (Windows Media Player), the Handheld Computers market (PocketPC 2002), and the embedded devices market (Windows XP embedded). Such a wide-based attempt at monopoly solidification and expansion is simply not healthy in a market economy such as ours.

As a computer science student, I hope that through wise government intervention and promotion of competition, the workplace I enter in a few years will not be further enslaved to the Microsoft monopoly. My future will be a much happier one if I can choose software products based on quality, not based on whether or not it will read Microsoft file formats.

It is a well-known saying in the computer world that once Microsoft enters a market, all hope is lost for incumbents who try to compete with their products. Is this due to superior products on Microsoft's part? Sometimes, but usually

not. It is really due to tricky marketing and product lock-in schemes. This is not right. A market economy will only thrive when exchanges are made willingly, not through product lock-in. A market economy will only thrive when competition forces higher product quality, not when monopoly causes sloth in product development on the part of the monopolist. For the sake of America's economy and the freedom of choice of America's consumers, I urge the Department of Justice and the judge in the Microsoft anti-trust case to impose stricter remedies on Microsoft.

Hoping for a just outcome in this case,  
Josh Hansen  
Student, US Citizen, Registered Voter